

Research Project

Empirical bioethics: an urgent need for a customized methodology?

Third-party funded project

Project title Empirical bioethics: an urgent need for a customized methodology?

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Organisation / Research unit

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Status Completed

Empirical bioethics (i.e., the use of qualitative and quantitative methodology in bioethics) is increasingly becoming a popular means of doing bioethical research. This movement from purely normative ethics to an ethics research that includes empirical work has gathered intense discussions on both sides from bioethicists and social scientists. A major criticism concerns the type and rigor of the methods used in bioethics. Empirical bioethics often faces difficulties disseminating their results in peer-review academic journals as a result of this methodology issue. These manuscripts fit neither the ethics journal nor the non-ethics journals. My personal experiences in the field confirm the difficulty that researchers encounter. The goal of this project is to explore whether there is a need for a customized methodology for empirical bioethics. To achieve this goal, first, a systematic review of literature will be conducted to evaluate whether the empirical trend in bioethics found by other studies is still happening, investigate what direction it is taking, and what this trend can tell us about the state of the future of empirical bioethics. Second, a survey of researchers at bioethics institutes in the European Union and North America (randomly selected sample) will take place to examine which methodologies they use, what their experiences with empirical methods have been, and what strengths and limitations that they perceive while using them. Based on their responses and the trends visible from the systematic review of literature, an analysis will be conducted to verify whether researchers see a need of a customized method in bioethics and, if so, provide recommendations as to what that method could be so that a standard can be established.

Keywords Ethics, Methodology, empirical ethics

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Published results

4133826, Wangmo, Tenzin; Provoost, Veerle, The use of empirical research in bioethics: a survey of researchers in twelve European countries, 1472-6939, BMC medical ethics, Publication: JournalArticle (Originalarbeit in einer wissenschaftlichen Zeitschrift)

4320348, Wangmo, Tenzin; Hauri, Sirin; Gennet, Eloise; Anane-Sarpong, Evelyn; Provoost, Veerle; Elger, Bernice, An update on the “empirical turn” in bioethics: analysis of empirical research in nine

bioethics journals, 1472-6939, BMC medical ethics, Publication: JournalArticle (Originalarbeit in einer wissenschaftlichen Zeitschrift)

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ID	Kreditinhaber	Kooperationspartner	Institution	Laufzeit - von	Laufzeit - bis
3720033	Wangmo, Tenzin	Provoost, Veerle, Prof.	Ghent University	01.06.2016	31.12.2019